



Cass Business School
CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON

To practise what we preach

An exploratory survey of values in charities

A working paper



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Centre for Charity Effectiveness

Intellectual leadership: developing talent, enhancing performance



This exploratory survey is produced by Visiting Fellows within Cass Centre for Charity Effectiveness (Cass CCE) and members of the KnowHow NonProfit team at NCVO.

Cass CCE has significantly enhanced the performance of hundreds of organisations and thousands of individuals across the nonprofit sector. Combining our extensive practical experience with best practice, theory and research we deliver a world class blend of postgraduate programmes, talent development and consultancy services. For further information, please visit www.cass.city.ac.uk/cce.

KnowHow NonProfit originated at Cass CCE and merged with NCVO at the end of 2011. It places great emphasis on 'social learning' that is providing ways for people working in the voluntary sector to learn from each other. It targets, in particular, smaller organisations within the nonprofit sector; those traditionally marginalised from training and development opportunities. For further information, please visit <http://www.knowhownonprofit.org>.

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Summary

Most charities have published values, which are disseminated externally through various media such as their website, annual report and recruitment advertisements. But do these values influence the day-to-day behaviours of employees and volunteers? There would appear to be a danger of hypocrisy. The fundamental question is: if values matter, how are they best demonstrated?

We had some anecdotal evidence that there might be a mismatch between published values and demonstrated behaviours. We realised that there was a strong need to undertake a practitioner-based and practitioner-focused survey to investigate whether charities and nonprofit organisations do practise what they preach and how they best use values. From the results, we hope to offer you practical advice and pointers as to how you can enhance the performance of your organisation through introducing, reviewing and enacting values effectively.

Over a quarter of million people fell within the scope of the survey, which was conducted between June and August 2011. 133 organisations, encompassing 54,841 staff and 203,402 volunteers, actively participated in the survey.

The organisations themselves represented a good cross-section of the sector. They were of different sizes, ranging from no employed staff to over 5,000 employees. They were of different types, focusing, for example, on service delivery or campaigns. Some were long-established; others were very young. Some had more than one site while others did not; however, combined, they covered many different regions within the UK.

Participating organisations were asked to complete an online survey composed of 14 questions. The anonymity of individuals and organisations within the overall results was guaranteed. However, based on responses, 19 organisations were selected and interviewed in more detail for specific case studies.

This report presents both the anonymised, summarised comments of all the participants and the named 19 case studies. Crucially, the statements made within the summary have been presented in the participants' own words in order to underline the strong practitioner focus of the report.

Based on previous values surveys, we were expecting to find significant repetition of key words such as 'respect', 'dignity', and 'innovation'. However, in practice, the range was much wider. For example, in our 19 case studies, we discovered that 39 different words in total were used between them. Interestingly, the most frequent words were: 'collaborate'; 'respect'; 'compassionate'; 'excellence'; 'professional'; 'creative'.

The litmus test for values is whether they influence behaviours, particularly when faced with a dilemma or a matter of tricky judgement. The responses included a number of examples of this:

- handling redundancy
- values-based recruitment
- helping a child whose mother was dying
- challenging a local authority
- disciplining a member of staff
- shaping a brand re-launch
- a safe space for discussion when things are not working.

To make values count – summary of the findings

Looking right across all the data which this survey produced, there is no one model which fits every organisation. But there are some **clear messages** as illustrated below.

- When producing a list of values, **consult widely** – not just with employees but also with volunteers and beneficiaries
“Take time to identify them clearly, but then do not tinker”
- Use **simple, memorable language** which points clearly to taking action in day-to-day work
“State them as outcomes”
- The way in which values are used may vary from one team to another within your organisation. They should be kept fresh through **regular conversations**
“Share the good stories that show what a difference your values make”
- Most charities use regular 1:1s within a **performance management** system as a method of checking on the values’ implementation. Some charities bring them into a competency framework
“The values maximise the ability to empower individuals”
- Use values to **re-energise** your people
“I do not think we could have survived the past few years without having had these in place.... The attitude that we have now, rather than that of even five years ago has seen us through.”
- Some organisations find it useful to consider both the **internal and external** impact of values
“We have externally published values which communicate our core beliefs. We also have cultural values which describe the behaviours we want to exhibit.”
- **Do not “police” the values too closely**
“There’s been five years of spreading the values gently, so everyone’s not necessarily living them, but conversations about the values have led to improvement and adopted behaviours.”
- The **Senior Management Team** (SMT) must not only help to create the values but must be seen as role models for them.
“Authentic and genuine commitment from the Senior Management Team.”

The questions

1. What is your name?
2. What is your e-mail address?
3. What is the name of your organisation?
4. What is your job title?
5. How many employees and how many volunteers do you have?
6. Are your values published on your website, annual report, etc?
7. Where else are they published?
8. Who was involved in drafting your values?
9. What is your main reason for having values?
10. Do discussions about values take place for each of these groups:
candidates during recruitment/employees/partner organisations/ etc?
11. Please give an example of values in action
12. How often are your values updated
13. What tips would you give to other organisations on making values worthwhile?
14. Are there any other comments which you would like to make?

The responses

The following is a summary of the responses and a selection of participants' views:

Q1, 2 and 3

What is your name?, What is your e-mail address?, What is the name of your organisation?

Q1 to Q3 were asked for general information and to allow us to return to organisations for case studies.

Q4: Job titles

Of the 133 responses received:

- 53 participants were CEOs
- 38 Directors
- 8 Trustees
- the remainder held a variety of roles including Development Manager, Senior Grants Officer.

Q5: Numbers of employees and volunteers

The smallest number of employees was zero (the charity only had volunteers) and the largest was 6,000. Some organisations had no volunteers; the largest number was 120,000.

Number of Staff	Number of Organisations
0-10	32
11-20	20
21-50	21
51-100	14
101 - 250	15
251 - 500	12
501 - 1,000	6
1,001 – 5,000	10
Over 5,000	3

Figures for numbers of staff in survey sample.

Q6: Values published on website, annual report etc

Are your organisation's values published on your:

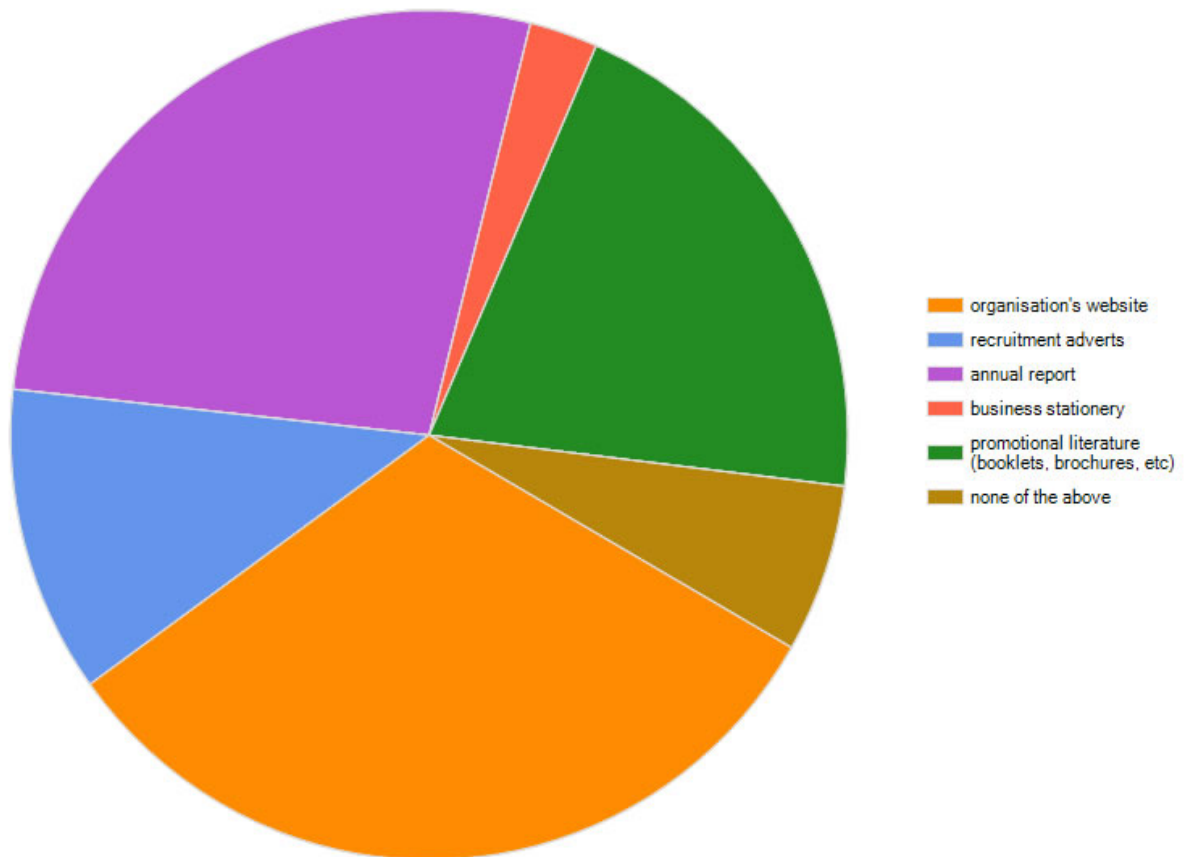


Diagram shows relative popularity of places where values are shown.

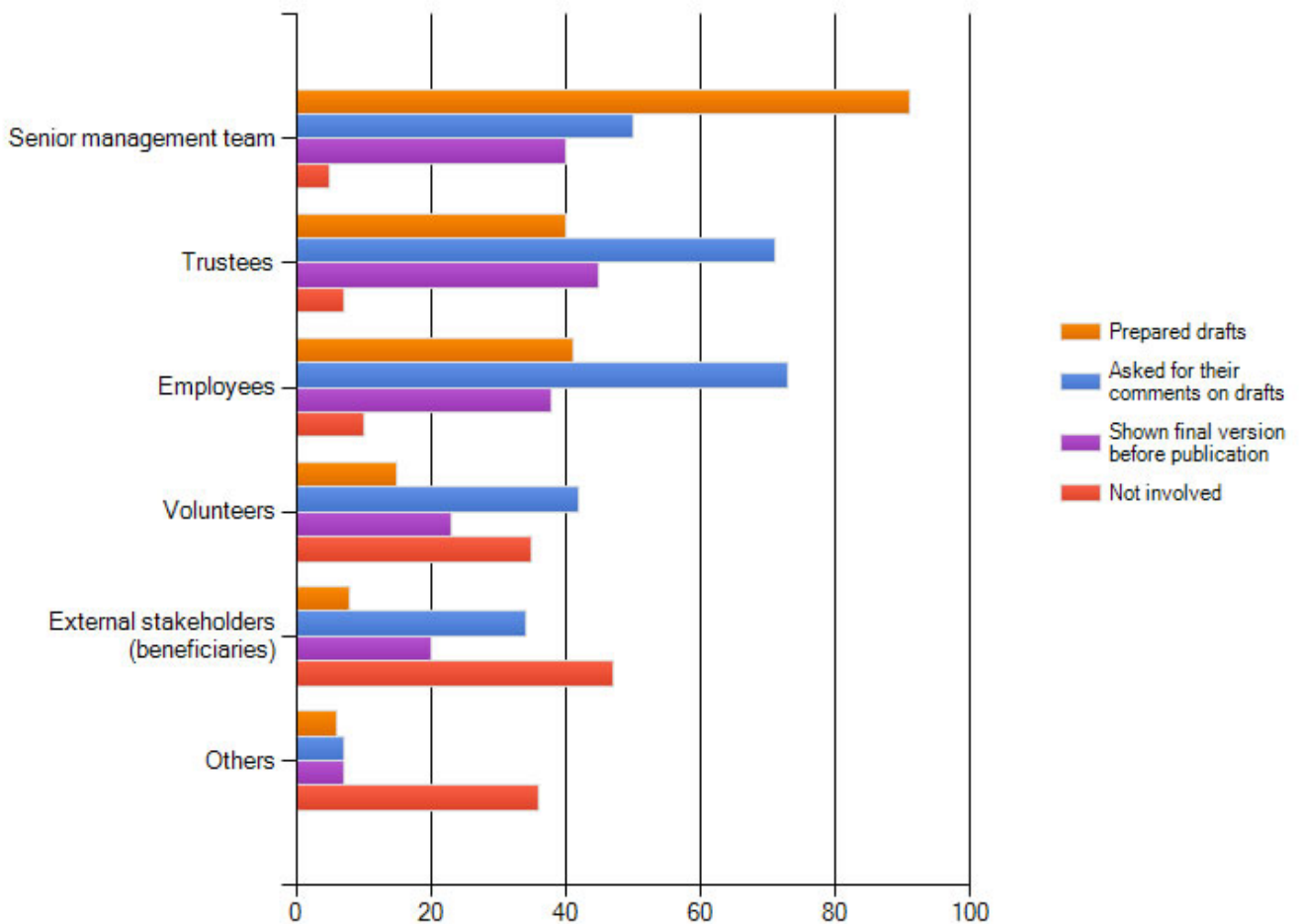
Q7: Published elsewhere (all comments received are shown)

- Internal communications such as staff handbook, intranet
- Corporate communications such as the Annual Review, corporate partnership brochure and stakeholder information
- We use them for evaluation and they can therefore be published in project reports
- Externally in tender applications. Internally they make up an important part of our induction for new staff
- On cars, radio, TV, reports, fundraising proposals etc
- Details on press releases
- At many Essex PCTs, in doctors' surgeries
- Community and networking events
- On the desktop of our computers
- Our meeting rooms are named after our values
- Through Facebook, and other social networking sites like You Tube videos
- AGM
- Ethos and values referenced in leadership and change training

- Ethos and values statements selected and used in bidding documents and organisational strategies and plans
- Strategy leaflet - on one page. This is sent to all job candidates
- Posters at all sites for staff, volunteers and public to see
- Through social media, direct mail, limited advertising, promotional partnerships
- Displays in all our nurseries, induction pack, recruitment papers
- Membership publications e.g. journals
- Fun cards on employees' desks; cups; bookmarks
- Noticeboards around the organisation
- Impact report.

Q8: Groups involved in drafting values

For each of the groups below, please indicate their involvement in drafting the values:



Q9: Main reasons for having values

Working together

- To ensure that employees, volunteers, those who partner with us, and those we support, understand, agree and display a common set of values - so that we can work better together
- We already had a stated philosophy but wanted to break down how we do our practical work with people and how this works in reality on the ground. We therefore came up with the “5 Senses” which is the nearest thing we have to “values”. They are: Sense of...Purpose, Place, Adventure, Occasion, and Achievement
- In a networked organisation such as ours, values are essential for holding the organisation together. I believe we are a weaker organisation because we do not explicitly have them
- Primarily, we would like to use them as a tool to emphasise the community aspect of the organisation, which has a tendency to be seen and experienced in more individual transactional terms by members
- To hold us together as a team and organisation
- To keep us grounded in the way we want to go about our work (not the what—the how and the why)
- They underpin how we deliver our mission. They provide a baseline expectation for how we work together to achieve our mission and direct the way we deliver services to clients
- Everyone who is part of the organisation plays a key role in building, delivering and expanding our work to deliver a vision. People need to be clear about how this is to be done. This means a clear mission, strategy, and objectives, but very importantly also our values which guide behaviours and decision making. The values maximise the ability to empower individuals.

Standards/quality/professionalism

- They articulate and reflect our charitable objectives
- To guide our behaviour and set expectations and standards for others about how we behave
- As aspirations we can judge ourselves against. Part of a wider change management approach so our values are what we want to be as an organisation
- The existence of values, in a documented sense, enables validation of the organisation’s quality within various quality requirements externally
- They provide purpose and accountability- but the challenge is to have a strategy to put them in action
- To guide our activities, to ensure everything we do has a wider purpose and benefit
- To underpin our objectives and thus our work and impact evaluation.

Culture

- We believe that the best chance of continued success is through our culture; values are central to this culture
- To keep the ethos and culture of a charity sustained and not to lose focus on this in the current climate where funding is limited
- To change the culture of the organisation
- Internally - to articulate some of the characteristics of our culture and behaviours and to build alignment
- We have externally published values which communicate our core beliefs. We also have cultural values which describe the behaviours we want to exhibit
- Create a “One Organisation, One Standard” united culture, ensure everyone knows what they have signed up for - to live and breathe the values
- We have them anyway - the idea of defining them and promoting them was a conscious one - but they exist even if they are not recognised!
- They are the benchmark of and underpin organisational behaviour.

Heritage

- Our values reflect those expressed in the life of our founder and are used as a foundation to inform and influence everything we say and do
- We are part of a 400 year old tradition which draws its values from the New Testament
- Our heritage is that we are a Catholic organisation which has strong values - these underpin everything that we do and the way that we do it
- Cooperative principles are integral to the work of a cooperative.

Focus

- To focus an understanding about how we should operate in everything we do and to ensure we are constantly reflecting on whether we are working as a social business
- To provide a focus for service users and staff and to inform the wider public
- They drive everything we do and keep us focussed on what we are about. Without them we are just a service provider, whereas we see our services just as an expression of our values
- To determine direction and no go areas, to promote internal cohesion and culture, to differentiate organisation
- We have principles, rather than values. They help spell out the way we expect people to go about our day to day work and set a framework within which to prioritise. They also help articulate what is distinct about us to external stakeholders
- To promote good behaviour and attitudes. Also use as a basis for measuring effective performance through a competency framework. This helps staff live the values on a day to day basis
- To give definition, uniqueness and priority to our activities.

Recruitment

- Attract staff with complementary values; to underpin expectations of staff behaviour and approaches to their work and other people
- Externally - to help in differentiation and in recruitment
- We ensure that everyone joining us as a volunteer, member, campaigner or staff agrees with the aims, objectives and values of the charity. Our values are:
 - **Ambitious:** We believe communities and individuals can change their own lives. We push ourselves and others to make this happen
 - **Honest:** We are accountable to our communities, donors and funders. We work with integrity, transparency and efficiency. We communicate clearly and responsibly
 - **Different:** We support, respect and value each other and work without prejudice. We are radical professionals, proud of our diversity, and united by a common cause
 - **Independent:** We are an independent charity, rooted in the communities we serve. We use our insight to innovate and inspire change in policies, services and minds
- They define what we do and help other people to understand what we're about. They also help organisations to decide whether or not they want to join us as members.

Demonstrate our commitment

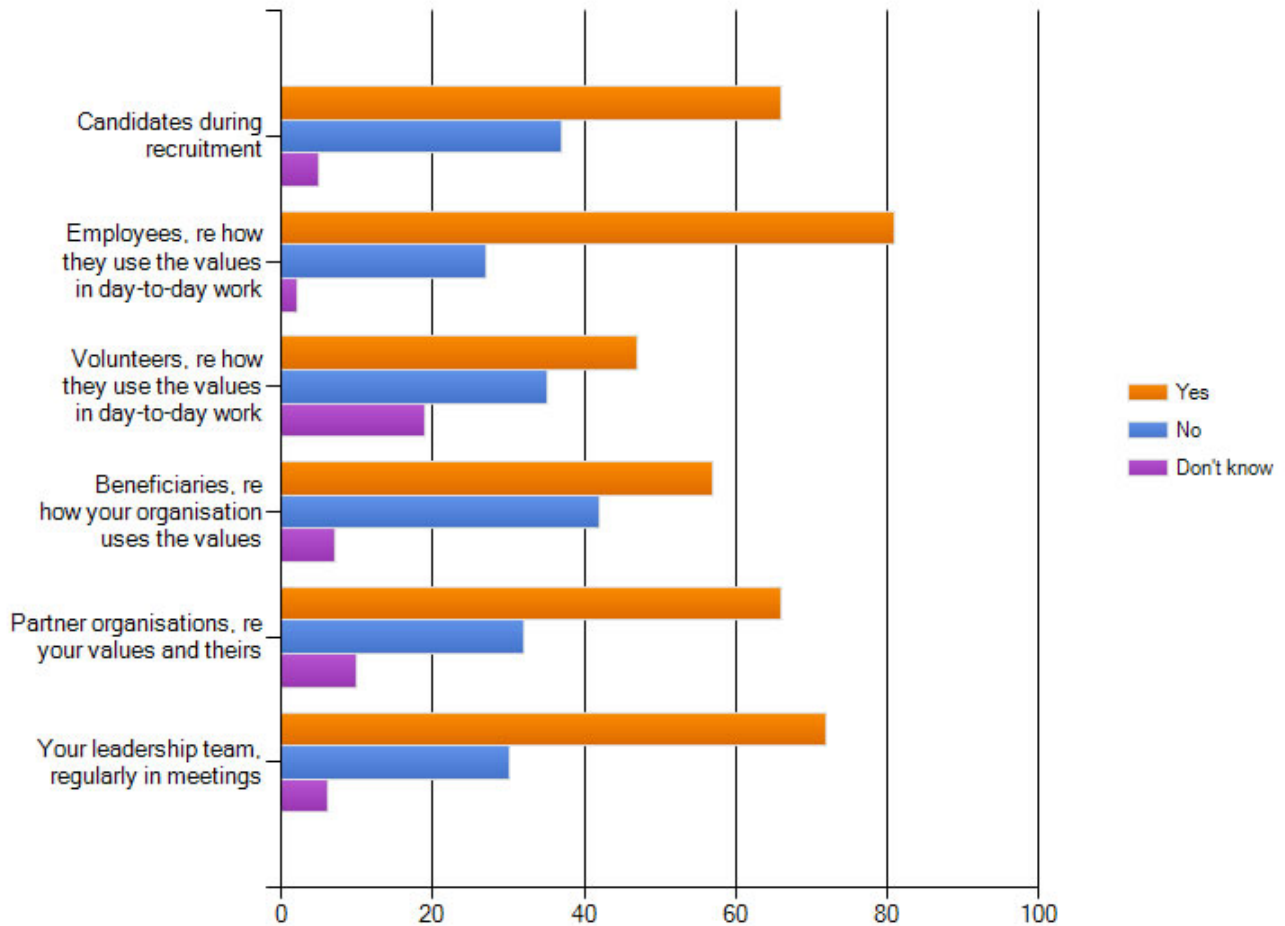
- To explain why we support prison reform
- A passionate belief in empowering excluded people
- The organisation needs an anchor and reference point that ultimately reminds us of the essence of the organisation and what we stand for- particularly during turbulent times
- To help attract appropriate grant applications
- So we show stakeholders how we intend to do business
- To give us a strong ethical reference point for all that we do; to guide how we manage our existing services and what types of new services we would seek to run
- Practise what we preach.

And finally:

- We have them because we are an ethical and moral organisation. We write them down because bureaucrats tell us we have to.

Q10: Discussions about values

For each of the groups below, do discussions about values take place?



Q11: Values in action

- The values, co-created by most key stakeholders, have been an essential element in shaping the brand re-launch of the organisation, planned for 2012. The values have shaped the external facing principles that will underpin the brand
- Since we have implemented values based interviewing our turnover within probation has become negligible. Ensuring that the people we recruit share our common values means that we can retain our entrepreneurial culture confident that our employees will act in the organisation's best interests without needing to resort to restrictive policies and processes
- Used them to inform our complaints and feedback policy

- One of our values in draft currently is **Courage**. We are about to launch a new clinical trials network. With any research, but particularly with trials, you need courage as they may not bring the results you want. We are also making some bold statements about speeding up the clinical trial process. There are some hurdles we need to jump and some obstacles we may face, so we need to be courageous as we go forward with this initiative
- Because we're committed to providing for people who are on the margins and left out of mainstream provision we continuously pioneer new activities without there being ready-made funding sources
- **Impartial** This value has helped the organisation position itself as a spokesperson for both the industry and the consumer during a review of an important piece of legislation
- In deciding on partnership arrangements with other charitable organisations, we ensure that we describe our core values and ensure that the partnership agreement reflects these
- We developed employment policies for our use but also to guide our partner organisations around the world - all were written with the Principles in mind. When faced with making staff redundant, again we tried to operate within the guidance of the Principles
- **Creativity** All members of staff are given opportunity to share their ideas for more innovative ways to engage communities. Recently the part-time Admin Assistant shared a great idea to reach a mass audience through specific events that she knew of
- **Authentic** We act in an open way with integrity and honesty. We are a membership organisation and so all our major decisions are communicated with, and voted on, by members. We therefore share in discussion with people affected by MS before decisions are made
- Within an arts workshop or planning for one we might ask about **Sense of Place** - is this activity and the way we are going about it really true to the people taking part? And giving them opportunity to do it their way and show who they are
- Our ethos and values are lived out by staff in day to day situations, and this happens without using the values as any sort of tool or mantra
- A child whose mother was dying was able to be with her mother in her final hours because a member of our social work team drove to the child's school to collect her and bring her in - otherwise she would have missed her mother's death. There are all sorts of issues that this scenario presents but we have child protection procedures in place and we applauded the social worker for considering the circumstances of this child and mother in the actions she took on this occasion
- We use our values as a checklist for determining whether policies and procedures are appropriate and ask ourselves if they reflect the stated values
For example:
 - **Trust** - are we putting trust in our colleagues and in individual and collective capabilities?
 - **Respect** - for individuals, communities and ourselves - are we respecting beliefs, faith and practices of others?

- **Honesty** - are we being honest about who we are and how we work?
- One of our Values is **Challenging Barriers** and with this as a backdrop we have supported many of our brokerage service users to challenge the local authority's process for dealing with their individual budget
- Paying for bed and breakfast for a family when we could not accommodate them in our residential home
- Disciplining a member of staff for inappropriate behaviour to others when that member of staff has a disability..... values helped guide our decision when two sets of legal principles pointed in different directions
- Avoiding employment law processes by working in a solution focussed way, working on aligning strengths and building on the *personal qualities* framework we have developed - hear the other's point of view and reflect on consequences of our own actions
- **Empowering** a front-line practitioner to lead an important PR event
- We are a social enterprise rather than a charity. This means that in everything we do, we centre around **client satisfaction** (which is a core value) as they are our bread and butter
- To practically demonstrate our **Green** value we commissioned an Eco-audit which produced a set of recommendations about energy and recycling and staff behaviour. This has now turned into an action plan with KPIs, with a lead member of staff appointed to implement the action plan
- We use our values: **Innovation, Collaboration, Inclusivity, Learning, Inspiration** to provide bespoke help and advice
- We decided as an organisation to stop working with [XYZ organisation] on our Customer Service Excellence mark as a result of their involvement in the death of a vulnerable man being deported from the UK
- Our core value is being driven by the needs and concerns of our **beneficiaries**. Examples of day to day actions are the involvement of beneficiaries in shaping our policy development. They are involved in recruitment panels and have been involved in contributing to major funding applications
- We frequently refer to our value statement about **not giving up on people**, no matter how complex they are in order to drive ourselves on to seek different solutions for our homeless service users
- Our finance policy - we always consider another cooperative in finding a new supplier. We recently choose the phone co-op as our new provider and have now got access to a small grant because of this
- One of our values is **Fun**. We try to promote how we are a fun organisation and believe that children should have fun too. Our promotional video clip involves young disabled kids having fun and causing mischief
- A proposal to have a chat forum for only one group conflicted with our value of **Openness** and so was rejected
- We have just had a meeting which included staff parents and clients to determine our objectives for the coming years....our values are about real **Inclusion** so as a result of yesterday we will be doing more work directly with families as well as our clients

- Last week we participated in a market testing exercise by a major mental health charity. Extraordinarily, two of their posters featured images of resources for self-harming and suicide, which is known to be a "trigger" to committing these acts. We protested to the charity (and its PR agency) and they promptly removed the very dangerous images
- Marketing - when attracting people, sponsors or media attention we always inform them of our ethos and why we work in a particular way to minimise miscommunications and misrepresentations of our views and work
- Attitude of charity shop managers when dealing with difficult issues
- One Value is to be **Accountable** to our community. We now have nearly 200 community people sitting on our grant making panels and feeding into our decision making
- Values are translated into a behavioural competency framework. All JDs have been rewritten with behaviours at different competency levels included, and all appraisals and performance management includes mapping of individual performance against the values framework. This brings them to life and into our day-to-day work
- **Child focused** has been critical in raising quality and checking poor or unsatisfactory practice
- We have four values - **Develop, Deliver, Own** and **Support**. These are reflected in both internal and external interactions. So staff need to support each other, but the enterprise supports our community through our work.
 - An example would be **Deliver**: it is of great importance that we deliver everything we do to the highest standard at all times. Before we introduced and reinforced this as one of our values it was something we did not always do! We have come a long way and won Social Enterprise of the Year 2011 in Yorkshire and Humber. This we feel reflects the impact of ensuring we are a value driven organisation
- Our values are not about how we operate as individuals or as an organisation but they are about how we think people in prison and their families should be treated
- One of our values is **Original** and another **Fearless**. We believe that these values can be observed in our decision making and willingness to enter into non traditional partnerships and in internal policies e.g. we were among the first charities to introduce fully performance related pay in 2005
- Staff are actively encouraged and supported to visit project countries, giving them hands-on experience to broaden their awareness of global development issues and making them better able to prepare and disseminate development themed classroom resources
- Values about **Choice** have enabled us to support people with learning disabilities to realise their dreams
- Our values are: **Respectful, Creative, Compassionate, Professional**. The application of these values is clearly seen when we have cases of performance issues with staff. We apply these by listening to staff, trying to understand root reasons for poor performance where appropriate and having compassion on challenges individuals face

- In transforming the charity from a telephone conference provider to a champion of combating loneliness and isolation
- Everything we do – in our front-line services and our own organisational development. As a line manager this helps me challenge my direct reports, even if they are meeting targets, to always think about how they can be better. We also have a value "We are **honest** about what works (and what doesn't) and learn from our mistakes" which balances this with a safe space for discussion when things aren't working
- We have integrated our values into our appraisal system which asks people to give examples
- We are dedicated to finding the cure for type 1 diabetes and improving treatment for type 1 on the path to the cure. We have mandatory type 1 awareness training for all new staff (which we also offer to trustees) so that they can develop an understanding and empathy for people living with type 1
- A good example of this is the pink ribbon (our brand colours) that the Director of Services has on her phone. This is a visual reminder to her of the values she is committed to every time she picks up the phone - especially if it is to a family who has had a loved one go missing or to a missing person themselves
- Breach of the values comes under discipline and grievance procedures and is treated as seriously as any other "offence" e.g. theft.

Q12: When values are reviewed

Time scale	Number
Every 6 months:	02
Annually:	15
Every 2 years:	04
Every 3 years:	15
Every 4 years:	02
Every 5 years:	02
Ongoing:	02
No fixed period:	06
Rarely or never:	09

Comments:

- If the values are failing to respond to the challenges we are faced with then they will need to be examined, collectively discussed, and a consensus reached on the appropriate action to take. It may be that our behaviours have drifted from the values, so the action is not necessarily to rewrite every value
- Before now we did not articulate values. From talking to people across the organisation there are different interpretations about what our values are. We went through a brand review and brand refresh last year and into this year. We now feel we need to establish our values so everyone involved understands and engages with them

- Individuals are expected to review their own performance against the values each year in their annual appraisal
- They have not been reviewed for at least 4 years and not only need reviewing, but then need to be shared and discussed and encouraged
- The six core values have been with the organisation a long time but are reviewed as part of the strategic cycle. In the new strategic plan, we have added 6 new operating principles or values which were endorsed by the employees
- Every two to three years. They are being reviewed particularly in relation to us developing pay-for services where staff are now selling, rather than just being funded to deliver services
- They are implicit rather than explicit and come in to focus when faced with dilemmas
- The values are not reviewed often but our way of delivery and improving their communication is constantly under review
- The Core values are fairly static, which offers stability and consistency in the "how we do things". The way we apply them however is explored and challenged often
- Recently have reviewed and restated values using a year long consultation process
- They are raised and revisited at every induction training and annual business planning.

Q13: Making values worthwhile and effective

Consult widely

- Consult with employees and trustees
- Get staff and volunteer ownership - especially on language
- Identify them from bottom up
- Ask as many people as possible what values are important to them in their lives and enable them to input into what they think organisation's values should be
- Take time to identify them clearly, but then do not tinker
- True consultation with staff and volunteers, not tokenistic
- Be clear about vision, and goals, then collectively agree the values most appropriate to deliver appropriate behaviours
- Involve beneficiaries (to ensure they are not full of jargon).

Lead from the top

- Make sure the leadership team models the values
- Authentic and genuine commitment from the Senior Management Team
- Values help guide decisions made by the board

- Managers and trustees need to consistently reflect and reinforce the values.

Use day-to-day

- Make them real - when developing them ask for examples of how they would be demonstrated day-to-day
- Monitor them - make sure you know they are happening
- Live them (and only choose those that you can)
- When making decisions do you refer back to your values and are they useful in this respect?
- Make sure all staff have the chance to discuss the values and translate them into examples of behaviours that relate to their individual work
- Do not think of them as just a list to publish - embed them in everything you do from meeting agendas to policy templates
- They must not be bland/apple pie - you need to be able to evidence how what you do reflects what you say is important
- Values are not something that you just think about once a year...they should be what everyone lives and breathes
- Live them or lose them.

Genuine, not gimmick

- Keep it genuine - not a marketing gimmick
- Make the language your own - and specific/original
- Make sure they reflect what you actually do - and are not just something that "sounds good"
- How honest are your values? Do they reflect what you believe or what you think you should be saying?
- It doesn't matter if they are the same as other organisation's values - just make sure that they are right for you
- Try to make your values distinctive from other organisations.

[and finally, two completely different approaches:]

- Realistic (not too aspirational)
- Make them aspirational, but achievable.

Link to processes

- Weave them into the organisation's policies and procedures
- Build them into the branding and reputational processes
- Ensure values and activities are aligned
- Values need to be simple and tied into recruitment, performance and impact review processes.

Simple and memorable

- Make the values clear and unambiguous. Limit yourself to very few - we have four
- Make the values memorable and distinctive
- Consider using a mnemonic to make them memorable. We have just developed CARE - collaborate; achieve; respect; empower
- Keep them short and concise
- Make them as easy to understand as possible.

Keep emphasising them

- Celebrate times when the organisation or individuals have lived the values
- Ensure they are visible in the office
- Once agreed, use every occasion to reinforce these values with staff - we issued all staff and volunteers with 'value cards' explaining each and giving examples
- Importance of a systematic process to cascade an understanding across the organisation
- The biggest challenge is not to use hackneyed phrases such as "staff are our greatest asset"
- Embed them by drawing attention of staff, beneficiaries and stakeholders to them on a regular basis
- We are conscious of the potential benefits that could accrue by promoting our organisational values more widely
- Own and use the values - apply them to everything unashamedly.

Make them meaningful

- Values cannot be imposed, they must be meaningful to everyone
- Produce a set of behaviours which represent each value to make them real to staff
- Make sure you know how to measure whether the value is being adhered to
- Test how well they are embedded as part of staff survey
- State them as outcomes
- They are at the core of what your organisation does
- Do not just assume everyone knows your values - write them down
- Reflect reality, as is.....inspire reality, to be
- Choose values you want to focus on as priorities (e.g. "positive"), not just the ones everyone agrees on- e.g. "sustainable".

Link to vision /objectives

- Link them to vision and mission of the charity
- Make sure your aims, mission and vision have a clear link to them
- Remember the reasons why you set up your charity
- Use them as a lodestone to avoid mission creep
- Consider how to use values to nudge your organisation in a given direction
- Use them alongside the strategic plan to challenge new directions.

Talk about them

- Admit when you fail to live up to your values and learn from it
- Give time and space for people to explore each value, what does it mean and how do we do it and what impact will it have
- Positive behaviours need to be regularly identified by management and voiced - e.g. “that situation was handled respectfully”. Also, correcting behaviours against values – “how could you have been more compassionate in that situation?”
- Share the good stories that show what a difference your values make
- Challenge policy and guidelines if they do not support the values
- Make sure that they are values in action, not just lip service, and seek open and honest feedback to evaluate this
- Tell people (everyone - stakeholders, service users, job candidates) about them
- Ask partners (include those organisations you fund) if your values make sense and ask if they think you stick to them.

Accountable

- Make everyone accountable for ensuring we all live according to our values
- Challenge behaviours that conflict with the values
- Discuss them in inductions, appraisals and supervisions
- Matched with a competency framework
- Link it to your performance management
- Include values in 1:1s
- Measure performance against the values
- Make sure that employees live and breathe the values
- Ensure that all elements of the charity (including trading arms) are able to sign up
- Practise what you preach.

Recruitment, induction & training/away days

- Include values in recruitment processes

- All staff to be made aware from start of employment
- Publicise and repeat them in induction and training
- Use them in team meetings/away days to provoke discussion
- You can attract new volunteers and employees who want to work for your organisation's values.

Q14: Other Comments

- We are currently considering distance learning study modules to make more explicit links for staff, volunteers and trustees between values and Catholic Social Teaching and key passages from the Bible
- I loved the comment made at Cass recently that Values should be lived not laminated...excellent!!
- Developing the values and principles that underpin our organisation has revolutionised us - we are happier overall, and more effective. We have a shared language to address disagreements or dilemmas
- Values are important to differentiate us as a sector and as individual organisations
- I am working hard at influencing people within the organisation to understand the need for values. I think progress is being made!
- What I found challenging with the organisation is the very strong focus on client satisfaction. What they didn't seem to grasp is that in order to have satisfied clients you need satisfied staff and the organisation tends to forget about its duty of care to staff
- Would be interested in seeing tool for generating values that is more sophisticated than what I have seen so far - please send if you have one!
- We often say: people do not experience our values, they experience our behaviours
- Values come first. They are not the gilding on the lily, but an explicit expression of what you believe, and therefore are the root of why your organisation exists and is doing what it is doing. It is worth working out for your own benefit what your real motivation is - it is not easy, but can save a lot of problems later on
- Values are the soul of a charity; however the fundamental task is to deliver value for beneficiaries. Organisational values need to be a tool in order to do this - a charity only deserves to survive if it makes a difference

- There is limited buy-in and awareness of values by staff as they are not referred to on a regular basis and are not used as far as I am aware in linking to work plans. They may be used by leadership but this is not communicated. They should be reviewed regularly. A quick email check with staff showed that none were able to list our values without checking the website. This would suggest they are meaningless
- We need to be better at all three factors and will be using them as a central theme of our annual conference
- Recent research we have done illustrates the importance of values to faith based social action projects and the value in being able to demonstrate them through quality standards
- In my experience, the larger charities appear less likely to adhere to core values
- Our values are too vague and universal. Who wouldn't want to be highly skilled and caring in their approach? I think there needs to be a little more depth to them and that, while they should apply to everyone across the organisation, they should be specific enough to guide activity and attitudes
- Review your values every once in a while to be sure you are living up to them
- Ensure you review, evaluate and if needed update your values
- They are not sacred and can therefore be changed
- Treat your staff according to your principles not just beneficiaries
- Look after and value your staff as much as your beneficiaries
- Staff should feel that their work is important in achieving our vision and that their skills are valued.

Case studies

We selected these 19 charities because each of them had an interesting approach. We believe that they offer valuable insight into how organisations of different sizes and types use values. They also demonstrate a variety of methods which reflect the culture of the organisation. They are presented in alphabetical order.

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Case study 01 – Action for Blind People

Charity name	Action for Blind People
Activity	Supporting and advising blind and partially sighted people on issues including employment, housing, welfare rights, technology and living independently
Interview with	James Roberts
Website	www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk
Employees	660
Volunteers	400

Main reason for having values:

The values were updated following a restructure where Action became part of the RNIB Group. They should guide the “how” and “why” of what we do.

Values journey

Driven by the Directors (team of four), the organisation embarked on a series of road shows country wide (April to July 2010) to involve staff in the new iteration of the five year rolling strategy. In addition to laying out the design for the longer term this included a good deal of discussing what the organisation looks like and feels like now and what would people like it to be like in the future. The events were highly interactive with real emphasis on engaging staff in the shaping of and subsequent embedding of the values.

The 4 values are:

Respectful

Honest and Open

Collaborative

Innovative

Further information:

The next phase has included both the branding of these values and piloting discussions within each team around what they will look like in practical terms for them. The results of these discussions will be shared on the intranet, in service level agreements and reviewed by teams at regular monthly meetings. This process will take place with every team including Directors, Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Trustees. Key to this is being specific locally and sharing with colleagues in the

organisation. It is based on a philosophy of “Engagement rather than information” in terms of bringing them to life for employees.

It is recognised that they are aspirational rather than the norm. Signs are that they are beginning to change approaches including a major collaborative venture between Action and other bodies in the sector to share best practice and pool resources.

Advice to other charities is to ensure Senior Managers are involved in living and embedding the values and go beyond just signing up to them. It is vital they undergo and support the process of embedding values with all the conversations and exploration that entails as well as committing to and signing them off.

Case study 02 – Catch22

Charity name	Catch22
Activity	Supporting young people
Interview with	Alison Ross-Green, Director of Organisation Development and Human Resources
Website	www.catch-22.org.uk
Employees	1200
Volunteers	700

Main reason for having values:

To establish a core culture for the organisation following a merger of two smaller charities.

Values journey

Merger in July 2008. Intensive branding exercise carried out and launched in November 2008. Although both organisations had value statements, Catch22 were advised by their brand consultants that beliefs and personality were the key and defining new common values unnecessary and old fashioned. During the rush to launch the new brand Catch22 admit that they too readily went along with this advice but by 2009 it was clear that staff missed a clear set of articulated values, and this lack was getting in the way of creating a seamless organisation and contributing to misunderstanding and conflict.

The response was the “We are...” project which although supported by HR, was led by a cross section of staff from across the organisation. Resource packs were designed for team managers to run focussed yet fun sessions with their teams and an internal competition was held - all aimed at identifying and defining key values. Using this feedback external consultants proposed the final set of values which gained widespread support, including senior managers and trustees by summer 2010.

The values are:

Original

Fearless

Non-Judgemental

Results Driven

Further information:

A small number of people were not happy in the new culture - the direction of which was confirmed by the "We are..." project-especially the focus on results - and left. The values give people permission to think and act in certain ways (e.g. Originally they were the first body to work (with Serco) on payment by results on re offending. They are used in training, induction and competency frameworks.

Tips

- Values are already present in the organisation - the question is to accurately reflect the ones that add most value and then help people make sense of them in their work.
- Only undertake a major review with a reason (e.g. merger or not fit for purpose anymore)
- Use your own language not "motherhood and apple pie"
- Involve people and be innovative.

Case study 03 – Cats Protection

Charity name	Cats Protection
Activity	Cats – sponsoring, adopting and keeping healthy
Interview with	Peter Hepburn, CEO
Website	www.cats.org.uk
Employees	500
Volunteers	8500

Main reason for having values:

To affect behaviour and be clear to all of our people where we position ourselves – they do this to an extent.

Values journey

The staff and volunteers work in small groups, which historically raised funds locally and spent those funds. This has now become more centralised and there has been five years of spreading the values gently, so, everyone is not necessarily living them, but conversations about the values have led to improvement and adopted behaviours.

The first one – we care about cats – is the most important. It is what motivates everyone. However, the fourth one – open and honest – is Peter’s favourite, also bringing that challenge to all.

Values:

We care about cats

We value and respect our volunteers, supporters and staff

We are committed to providing a service of the highest quality

We are open and honest

Further information:

Q11 on the questionnaire¹ – a small group set up an online forum with avatars². This allowed statements to be made that weren't always in line with the values, especially the second one - We value and respect our volunteers, supporters and staff. This is being replaced with a central forum with people contributing under their own names which also spoke to the fourth value. They did look at the counter argument of people feeling that they could speak out using the avatars where otherwise they felt they couldn't but this was decided not to fit with the values.

The trustees decided clarity around strategy was needed and this was what prompted the vision, mission and values statements. They consulted widely across the organisation and held focus groups. The values have stood the test of time – they have had them for five or six years now. They are revisited each year when they are discussed with trustees and the SMT; they ask, 'How do you find it in reality?' They do not feel the need to re-consult more widely; they trust that their people would flag to them if they didn't feel the values were working any more. Department teamwork plans and 1:1 appraisals will see the values raised – not in every case, but where they need to be, and sufficiently often to provide some feedback up the chain. This fits within the performance management process. In 1:1s, either party will raise the values if they do not feel that they are being lived. These conversations take place throughout the year. They know that people are talking about them and will raise any concerns.

The first value really engages people and the others balance that with caring about the cause. That caring doesn't make it ok to behave badly and that's why the second value is so important.

¹ Values in action.

² An avatar is a small graphic used to identify people on a website or online discussion board. It sits alongside a user's posts to easily identify them at a glance. It is often an image intended to be a creative alter ego, which allows people to contribute with more freedom than they might otherwise do with their own identity.

Case study 04 – Connection

Charity name	Connection – the floating support team
Activity	Helping keep people in housing who have previously been homeless or are in some other way vulnerable or isolated
Interview with	Mark Thompson, Chief Executive
Website	www.connectionfs.org
Employees	75
Volunteers	8 (trustees)

Main reason for having values:

As a way of going about things.

The values:

Employing highly qualified and experienced staff

Operating under comprehensive diversity policies for staff and Service Users

Prioritising, caring and being understanding of people's situations and difficulties

Helping people achieve independence

Client-Focused support

Involving people in communities

Further Information:

I feel values are more a way of going about things – I think it is patronising to have them written down. It is much more about what goes on, it is about being person centred, having a sense of natural justice, being assertive and about humanity of response.

We have a caring but professional response to our clients respecting the boundaries of all. We seek to make connections with other people and organisations. Our values are a description of the work we try to do and talk about our approach.

It used to be that in recruiting people, we'd go with skills and experience then seek to mould values but that seems to be changing. We used to have values statements, but no one really liked them.

The values mean different things for different communities in the organisation – me, the board, and different staff. They are all likely to give a different interpretation but what's important is that there are shared intentions, behaviours, what we do and our ways of going about stuff.

Case study 05 – Energy Institute

Charity name	Energy Institute
Activity	Developing professionalism and good practice across the energy sector
Interview with	Sarah Beacock, Professional Affairs Director
Website	www.energyinst.org
Employees	50
Volunteers	500+

Main reason for having values:

To assure clarity around the two key aspects of their work: Professionalism (Sound Science) and Independence.

Values journey

The organisation merged in 2003 at which point the values were reviewed.

There are seven values:

Independence

Sound Science

Professionalism

Collaboration

Transparency

Respect

Worldwide

Further information:

Of these Sound Science and Professionalism are absolutely core and go to the heart of the code of conduct which individual members sign up to. The Institute is looking to review this and make it even more meaningful in the future and there may be a more overt link to the organisation's values at this point.

Involvement with staff takes place via regular all staff meetings where, apart from discussions on progress and strategy, values will also be reviewed. The SMT and

Council also have away days where these will at times be discussed and reviewed. They are also displayed on our website and referred to in literature. In addition there are some links via competency frameworks for managers (developed as part of our IIP accreditation).

All volunteers are exposed to them as they are key people in regional branches where professional member interviews and less formal meetings with members take place. Overall the emphasis is low key and more by actions and service provision than overt statements.

Key advice to colleagues in other charities would be to keep them simple as without memorability it is very difficult to embed and live values.

Case study 06 – Fresh Horizons

Charity name	Fresh Horizons
Activity	Providing employment for those who have difficulty securing work and who live in deprived areas
Interview with	Mike McCusker, Managing Director
Website	www.freshhorizons.org.uk
Employees	60
Volunteers	140

Values journey

When he joined as MD in 2005, Mike went and looked at what was being done in the sector. He visited a social enterprise in Liverpool and noticed how explicit and “in your face” their values were.

When he arrived, he was concerned about delivery. Mike had a series of workshops with all staff. They talked about what they were doing every day and looked at key words that represented values that a manager had pulled from a range of their job descriptions. From this staff prioritised and agreed the top four values. These were then agreed by the senior management team and Board of Fresh Horizons

Staff then discussed how to reinforce the values and worked with them to ensure that the values were the first thing that you saw on the website, that they were prominently displayed in their buildings and value cards were given to each member of staff – one card for each value explaining and giving practical examples of how they could reflect the values in their work.

There are two ways the values work – externally and internally as reflected through behaviours and personal development. In the latter, they are reinforced in the training plan, marketing materials, web site etc. Cards were issued with the four values on. They were quizzed, and if they got all four correct, they were given £1. The values have been embedded in the annual appraisals – they are asked to demonstrate how what they are doing acts out the values.

The new values were launched in 2007. They are visible, there were the cards and they are up on the walls. They have a fairly static workforce.

The values are a single word each as this was easier to remember than anything longer. With the value cards, there’s an explanation of the values on the reverse side.

Of the values, “deliver” is probably the most popular amongst the staff. They like the idea of keeping their word. “Own” is also linked to deliver and is about owning

problems and calling each other on that. “Deliver” is key and has kept the values alive rather than just being nice people doing nice things. The enterprise part of the social enterprise comes from this.

The values:

Develop

Deliver

Own

Support

Further information:

(From the current Fresh Horizons business plan):

Fresh Horizons A Value Driven Organisation

Our mission is: “To grow our local enterprise into a nationally renowned enterprise which helps people to be proud of what they do and where they live. We do this through our unique reach into communities, by bringing people together and inspiring them to own new opportunities for jobs and learning, community assets and enterprises.”

This is reflected in our Values which are: Develop - Deliver - Own – Support

Develop

We are always ready for change and looking for ways to develop our organisation, our staff, our products and services to ensure we have the capacity to meet the needs of the private, public and community sector now and in the future.

Deliver

We complete jobs on time to a high quality every time. We deliver everything we do to the highest standard at all times, from the services we provide to the contracts we win and continue to be seen as one of the best social enterprise in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Own

The services we deliver allow us to give the local community ownership of the opportunities we provide by consulting them and taking action on their points of view. We strive to ensure that we can take ownership of the buildings we manage so that they become assets for our community and a base from which to further grow and develop. As members of the Fresh Horizons team we take ownership of problems when we come across them regardless of whether they fall within our own job description. We are supportive of one another and try to address issues once they are identified.

Support

As we grow we are able to support many things, by building great foundations and relationships with many different organisations. We support our community and other groups and organisations who share our goals and values. We support each other in everything we do and go the extra mile to help a colleague who is struggling to complete a task.

Case study 07 – Interhealth

Charity name	Interhealth
Activity	Providing support and information to those improving health and healthcare
Interview with	Becky Hill, Director of Client Services
Website	www.interhealth.org.uk
Employees	60 (28 FTE)
Volunteers	5 (Interns)

Main reason for having values:

A way of supporting implementation of a strategic review with values which are simple, memorable, inclusive and inform behaviours and processes.

Values journey

Three years ago Interhealth embarked on a strategic review and wanted to renew the values whilst remaining congruent to the ethos of the organisation's foundation in 1989 (faith based). A whole series of staff lunches and discussion groups were held to address questions around "What are our key values?" specifically in relation to how we work with one another and deliver to our clients both organisational and individual. Much time was spent looking at how they would be lived in all areas of the organisation from clinical to finance to working on the front desk. This can be particularly important considering clinical and client relationships.

The four values are:

Respectful

Creative

Compassionate

Professional

Further information:

These are embedded chiefly through conversations at all levels and using them as a framework to help fall back on and inform. There are also questions in the appraisal process to check on how far people believe they are being "lived". The impact often comes as much through the conversation around the specific than the decision on the specific itself.

Managers in particular ensure that good examples are referred to at team and one to one meetings where a culture of reinforcing the positive is actively used. They are also highly visible via posters and cards on employees' desks.

They are used in recruitment and induction. The organisation has recently reviewed them and decided they are all still relevant and is currently considering how to assess impact via client satisfaction studies.

They frequently inform discussions around performance and help to resolve conflicts before they gain a momentum of their own.

Advice is to be comfortable with a culture where it is "ok to screw up" and to understand that the most powerful activity to embed values is via discussion.

Case study 08 – Jewish Care

Charity name	Jewish Care
Activity	Supporting and caring for members of the Jewish community
Interview with	Diane Blausten, Director of Human Resources
Website	www.jewishcare.org
Employees	1200
Volunteers	2500

Main reason for having values:

In 2005 the organisation was facing a large deficit, low morale and high turnover. The new CEO and top team committed to a 10 year strategy aimed to make them the best care organisation in the UK. Values were seen as an integral part of making this happen.

Values journey

In 2005 the top team got together for two days (facilitated) to construct a ten year strategy and align on the values for the organisation. Most staff are not Jewish so the values align with Jewish values but are expressed in an inclusive way.

The values are:

Enabling

Caring

Integrity

Excellence

Inclusive

Further information:

Leadership programmes for the top 80 managers on how to live and embed these were supplemented by coaching workshops and were delivered by a Director and 20 champions from the top management team. This was very impactful. There was some iteration though the framing was largely top down as a result of the existing state of mind of the organisation and the need to gather momentum swiftly. All staff

and volunteers who manage attended workshops which use practical tools (eg Spiral of positivity and Relationship bank account) and are heavily evaluated.

Values are expressed in behaviours and woven in to recruitment, induction, PDRs and recognition for teams and individuals.

The top team are now moving to the next stage in order to further develop confidence in decision making at all levels and greater understanding of the personalisation agenda.

Examples of how values impact on actions/results include instances of managers having “courageous conversations”, an individual foregoing an invite to appear on “Britain’s Got Talent” in order to fulfil a commitment to his community group and a turnaround in people wanting to work in the organisation. (Staff service has moved from 3.5 years to 7 years in this time and IIP has positively commented on levels of engagement and satisfaction)

Key advice is to judge how best to engage people throughout the organisation depending on how used to this they are AND that the executive team are personally involved in communicating the values as well as being committed to them.

Case study 09 – Living Streets

Charity name	Living Streets
Activity	Campaigning for pedestrians, walking promotion and services to improve streets
Interview with	Tony Armstrong, CEO
Website	www.livingstreets.org.uk
Employees	35
Volunteers	80

Main reason for having values:

As aspirations we can judge ourselves against. We set them as part of a wider change management strategy so our values describe how we want to be as an organisation.

Values journey

In 2008 the values were effectively dead. In addition, we wanted to transform Living Streets' reputation with stakeholders and avoid some historic charges of being too aggressive or negative. A change of culture was needed. Through discussions staff and Trustees thrashed out meaningful values; supporters and volunteers were consulted through a conference and focus groups. The values were adopted as part of a wider new organisational strategy which in turn informed an organisational re-brand which was values-led.

The values are:

As an organisation, we strive to be: Challenging; Positive; Enabling

As individuals, we strive to be: Effective; Knowledgeable; Collaborative

Further Information:

Values are part of the organisational culture and staff are encouraged to consider the values in what we do. Although not a formal part of the recruitment process, interview panels are aware of the need for successful recruits to be a good fit with the values. Performance appraisals focus on individual objectives from the business plan which has values at its heart. Values are included when bidding for contracts and new funding and whenever there are opportunities with partner organisations.

As an example of how the values affect action, some supporters had previously used angry leaflets about pavement parking which they attached to car windscreens. This

reflected badly on the organisation and was ineffective. Some campaigners felt better, but the problem didn't go away. Using our values, the organisation now supports people to take action locally using more positive methods which are more effective.

Case study 10 – London Early Years Foundation

Charity name	London Early Years Foundation
Activity	Social enterprise providing childcare for children in London. Also runs training, development and apprenticeship programme as part of business, all delivered with multi-generational approach.
Interview with	June O’Sullivan, CEO
Website	www.leyf.org.uk
Employees	350
Volunteers	20

Main reason for having values:

To focus an understanding about how we should operate in everything we do and to ensure we are constantly reflecting on whether we are working as a social business.

Values journey

June became CEO in 2005 and didn’t like the shape of the organisation. June wanted to rethink the whole LEYF model from business delivery to curriculum. She wanted to have the concept of social enterprise flow through the whole service and that included the curriculum. She was interested in the New Zealand model particularly because of its emphasis on community and the role her organisation could play in developing social capital through the way we deliver community nurseries.

One of the first things needed to achieve this was getting buy-in to their values. They had the support of their staff who were worried that they might go out of business, as they had recognised that government funding wouldn’t last for ever – the social business model had a fee structure which allowed some parents to pay.

There followed a re-branding. Values were the starting place for that. Last year, they checked the validity of their values, the 5 Cs. Staff agreed they’d gone off the boil. Work was done in the nurseries to identify how the values were lived. The first value – child focused: we place the child at the centre of all we do – is the most powerful and is constantly referred to. They also like “**Courageous**: we are able to push boundaries and test new ideas, always standing up for what we believe in” very much. Staff will have their own examples of how the values are in operation.

They mainly use the values for procurement and when they look at re-jigging systems they underpin this.

Apprentices are taught the 5Cs and they are also used at induction.

Each nursery did work – made a display – which showed what the values looked like in action. This work has been used to remind them of the values and to thank them for their work on the displays as well as sharing the stories and reactions.

The values:

Child focused

Collaborative

Courageous

Creative

Constant

Case study 11 – MacIntyre

Charity name	MacIntyre
Activity	Supporting children and adults with learning disabilities, across 120 locations in the UK
Interview with	Bill Mumford, Managing Director
Website	www.macintyrecharity.org
Employees	2200
Volunteers	200

Main reason for having values:

They provide purpose and accountability – but the challenge is to have a strategy to put them into action.

Values journey

Their principles of service have evolved from wide consultation with staff and stakeholders. They found that “values” was not a strong enough word:

“People do not experience our values, they experience our behaviours.”

Instead they make **Commitments** to all people whom they are supporting. These include:

We will support you to communicate with us in a way of your personal choosing

You will be supported to take as much control of your life as you wish

Further information:

This emphasis on empowerment carries over into how the staff are led. A Rapid Personality Questionnaire is used as a self-assessment tool at recruitment. Staff surveys are used, and the Workforce Director is constantly in touch with employees by walking about.

A new website, MacIntyre Stories, helps families and carers discover the reality of the organisation’s approach.

A further vehicle is a 70-page book called “Great Interactions” which brings out the way in which “naturals” (staff with a natural ability to relate to people and to win their confidence) interact with clients and others.

MacIntyre is notable for its determination to become a true learning organisation and its willingness to share its experience with other charities.

It identifies its DNA as “Ain’t what you do it’s the way that you do it”.

Case study 12 – Mind in Exeter and East Devon

Charity name	Mind in Exeter and East Devon – in transition to Phew (Devon)
Activity	Information and advice about mental health issues
Interview with	Amanda (Manda) Williamson
Website	www.mindex.org.uk
Employees	29
Volunteers	20

Main reason for having values:

...and for having the ones they now have – reflect that the people we want working for us are those who share our values – a strong affinity with the values is more important than skills or experience. Values give a shared language for what we're trying to achieve and deliver. Values have led to the transition.

Values journey

About ten years ago we realised that the organisation was working towards different ideologies rather than towards a clear vision or evidence-based idea. At this time, there was much unhappiness and discord amongst colleagues and it became apparent that in fact, what they had was two different organisations [the reorganisation currently taking place, the transition to Phew mentioned above, is the realisation of this division into two organisations]. We had 'old style' values but they allowed for interpretation. They were tokenistic. They'd been decided around a table by people who didn't get along and weren't useful.

The values they have now have evolved and been developed by the people who live with them, and own them – the staff in the organisation. The staff call them principles rather than values and they answer the questions "what do we need to be like?" and "how can we [the organisation] be the best we can be?"

The principles are well intentioned and realistic, they use plain language – I listened to the way staff were talking about what they were doing and the language they were using and formed the principles from what I heard.

The principles can be applied to everything we do, they are about personal responsibility rather than a system in which to hide and avoid sorting something out.

The principles are re-visited at an event twice a year when all the staff are together when we add to them and play around with them. Everyone agrees to them at the end of these meetings.

I do not think we could have survived the past few years without having had these in place. We've had a tough year – 30% income cut whilst having to be more productive, lots of serious illness in the organisation this year – and in that of the families of staff – including bereavement but the attitude that we have now, rather than that even five years ago has seen us through. The organisation has survived – and in good shape – with things that in the old style we might not have coped with, or at least have dealt with in a much more negative way.

Principles include:

We believe that everyone has strengths and qualities that can support their recovery and improved wellbeing, and we will support people to recognise and build on these.

We strive to keep our promises and if we do ever break a promise, we will do our best to mop up any consequences.

We do not do for someone what they can do themselves, and we will help them do it, or learn to do it, when needed/asked.

We do not do what some one/thing else can do better, and we will do our best to know what other opportunities are available, and maintain our support until no longer needed/requested. In return we will share our skills, knowledge and resources.

Wellbeing is NOT a spectator sport – we must model our message.

We will strive to be our best and we will keep learning.

Case study 13 – Missing People

Charity name	Missing People
Activity	Campaigning and practical support in the area of missing people
Interview with	Jonathan Hirst, Local Areas Manager
Website	www.missingpeople.org.uk
Employees	48
Volunteers	100

Main reason for having values:

The organisation had a strategic review around a year ago and overall purpose was reviewed (all staff were involved in this). Values were also discussed. Subsequently the CEO and senior team decided that producing a set of organisational values was not the best way to proceed as they could be too bland to be meaningful for teams and individuals and that the way people behave and focus would be the key exhibition of the organisation.

Values journey

Jonathan reports to the Director of Services and recently attended the Cass CCE Masters programme on Voluntary Sector Management. He has a new team of three with two people in Yorkshire and West Midlands respectively. They decided they wanted to discuss their own values in order to help describe how they and volunteers want to be and show up as representatives of Missing People. Three months ago they had a session when they brainstormed their values regarding: external world, Missing People colleagues and finally their own team. These were then encapsulated into three sentences. They are now building these in to the induction programme for volunteers and Jonathan is considering how to bring them to life further by having them as part of the performance management discussions. The next step will be to revisit these when the team expands by three people in the new financial year... and to see if they have a universal appeal or if they are just the views of the original four people.

It is early days but Jonathan sees these as informing day-to-day behaviours in how people show up on behalf of the organisation.

Further information:

His advice is that values cannot just be cascaded down an organisation; teams have to make sense of them and own them. He therefore questions the value of organisation wide objectives setting that involves only the senior members of an

organisation. Instead he suggests that each department or team goes through the process together of defining their values and behaviour to both each other and those outside of the team. If organisation-wide values are required, then they should be written as a compilation of the departmental values; thus starting bottom-up rather than top-down.

Bland and vague words are of little use and the value of the discussion, thinking and dialogue are vital in embedding them and bringing them to life.

Case study 14 – Murray Hall Community Trust

Charity name	Murray Hall Community Trust
Activity	Promoting health and wellbeing in the West Midlands
Interview with	Richard Beckett
Website	www.murrayhall.co.uk
Employees	80
Volunteers	50

Main reason for having values:

To determine direction and no go areas, to promote internal cohesion and culture, to differentiate organisation.

Values journey

The values are embedded in the text of the website rather than being listed on it.

Murray Hall started in 1994 with two people working from the back of a church hall. They were interested in working with those they helped rather than doing things for them. That way, the action stays with the beneficiary. They deliver contracts and also work in smaller ways in communities. They aim to lift people out of the 'press' that surrounds some of the estates they live on.

Health is central to their work and the balance is towards well being and a whole person approach including for those moving towards the end of their lives.

The organisation grew strongly and quickly – the tipping point was when they became a contracting organisation – and so needed systems in place. This was three or four years ago. This shift created internal tension – are we a charity or a company?

They went back to basics to examine values and if they'd changed and if so, how?

They consulted staff on this and ensured they were brought along. They addressed the whole of the organisation and their hearts and minds.

They formed groups of change champions. One the things they were to examine was what the values were. They stuck pretty much with the original values and captured some of the implicit stuff. They included trustees and volunteers in this too.

The values also look to the future and their aspirations. There were no big surprises even though 700 values and principles were recorded when they did the exercise and the values they have grown out of this.

Because they have investigated the tension between business and charity 'pulls' the values exercise has reminded them about what's the right decision for them. The values offer a compass to help decide what they want to do in terms of the work they pick up and do. It keeps the focus balanced.

Values guide doing the right things and doing them right. Especially important as they are a charity. In this way they can be in the golden zone for sustainable growth.

In interviews, job candidates are asked how their values interplay with those of the organisation. The values are sent out to applicants. They are core to what we do and how we do it.

The 700 gave a menu from which they can pick. They use the most appropriate statements for whichever purpose – e.g. Contracts, bids.

They are now at the stage of making a broad statement which captures the values live, but because of engagement, that's where they are from anyway. This is what I do, and this is what I believe – they are organic in this way.

Further information:

Though they are small, the conversations and debates are the same and they have to go after funding in similar ways to larger organisations. They struggle with the question, "How do you describe yourself as a charity when you're a contracting organisation?" and the values help answer that. They are especially important, because so many of their people live in the communities they represent. Have to be 'real'.

Case study 15 – National Union of Students

Charity name	National Union of Students
Activity	Promote, defend and extend the rights of students, as well as championing students' unions.
Interview with	Matt Hyde, CEO
Website	www.nus.org.uk
Employees	170
Volunteers	1000

Main reason for having values:

To act as a focal point for re-energising an organisation in real difficulties financially, strategically and operationally in 2006

Values journey

Part of the change team's work at this time included a strand looking at establishing a performance culture in the organisation, of which a key part was establishing values and behaviours. The process involved the senior team having an away day to decide the key areas and then roll them out down the organisation (this was mainly top down rather than consultative). They distinguished between those needed for external communication (Democracy, Equality & Diversity, Collectivism) and internal/cultural ones. The five agreed upon for the latter were:

Open

Achieving

Principled

Collaborative

Engaged

Further information:

A competency framework was established and linked directly to appraisal and scoring. (Not linked to PRP) backed up by examples. In retrospect NUS recognise this was too clunky and they encountered some resistance from staff. It was refined and streamlined over the next two/three years but initial resentment lingered.

NUS are now refreshing the values as they have three distinct parts of the NUS Group and have found that people refer far more readily to the mindset and meaning behind the values than first time round. The process this time is more consultative and there is a lot of emphasis on the words being meaningful in terms of translating to everyday work. E.g. “Ever Learning” can be used in planning and evaluating. “Fun” is far too bland.

Discussions will remain in appraisals but the emphasis now is on having the discussion rather than producing a rating (“a distraction from the conversation”). The SMT have introduced 360 and it is an aim to gradually devolve this through the organisation.

Tips

- Build it in to appraisal but avoid crude scoring
- Involve staff and stakeholders in determining the values
- Make them meaningful so they can be evaluated and used in performance management
- Spend time getting them right
- Remember the journey (the discussion) is as important as the destination

Case study 16 – St John of God Hospitalier Services

Charity name	St John of God Hospitalier Services
Activity	Providing a range of health, social care and pastoral Hospitalier Services that meet the needs of vulnerable disadvantaged and marginalised people
Interview with	Lesley Robinson, Head of Pastoral Care
Website	www.sjog.org.uk
Employees	1400
Volunteers	20

Main reason for having values:

They are the same values held by their founder and were built on his experiences. The values are applied by the Brothers by everything they say and do. Values are stated as key in their vision.

Values journey

Everyone's accountable for making the values central to what they do. They have a values based reflection at the start of their meetings. It is not always a faith-based piece, it can be a piece of writing or a poem, and it may resonate with something they are focusing on. It reminds them to stop and take stock. The reflection brings people into the room and brings that lens to what they do.

Lesley represents the Brothers at the strategic level of the organisation.

The values:

Compassion

Hospitality

Justice

Respect

Trust

Further information:

The principles evolved. About three years ago they changed the language of the vision and mission to make it more contemporary.

Of the values, the most important one is 'hospitality' and the others really come from that. The idea that you arrive as a stranger and leave as a friend.

They have explored language with staff. They start at the individual level – for example, what's respect, what does it look like, how do you do it in your job? That type of conversation continues in staff meetings and appraisals.

Storytelling is important in bringing the values to life. They use the story of the founder to link to the values.

They ask people to share stories about when they have experienced hospitality.

The values have been reviewed and the application of them is revisited often but the values themselves have not changed. They offer something to hang onto in difficult times or times of uncertainty. They keep you on track – why do I continue to do this when it is difficult? We look to the values, and that's why.

These values come from those of the Brothers who have many more – 18 in all. In the late '70s they sent them out to people in a long list and asked, "Which do you feel you could sign up to?" and "which should be the focus for the work we do?" From that exercise, the five we now have were chosen.

Two-three years ago they asked, "How do people feel about having just one?" Hospitality was suggested as that's the over-arching one. People – the staff and those they support – said they wanted to keep all five.

Hospitality is the one that prompts the most discussion, beyond the doing of it – tea – and towards the being – how people feel – both giving and receiving.

Case study 17 – Teach First

Charity name	Teach First
Activity	Recruits exceptional graduates to become teachers in schools in challenging circumstances, and supports them to go on to become leaders inside and outside the classroom.
Interview with	Will Davies, Director of HR
Website	www.teachfirst.org.uk
Employees	200
Volunteers	2000 “Ambassadors”

Main reason for having values:

Values are central to our culture, which provides the best chance of continued success.

Values journey

In May 2009 we began a consultation with all employees and a sample of trustees, participants, ambassadors and external experts to define our values. Our mission tells people what the charity is all about; our values explain how to work in order to achieve it.

We try to keep things really simple. We used to have a 90-page employee handbook – instead we now have a small number of policies but we trust our people using the maxim “Act in Teach First’s best interests”. We feel that if we formalised issues too much we would damage our entrepreneurial spirit.

We explore people’s values at the recruitment stage; we have recently developed competencies which are related to the five values.

The values:

Collaboration

Commitment

Excellence

Integrity

Leadership

Further information:

Each of our meeting rooms is named after a value.

Our model is to increase employee freedom as we grow. We tell new employees “Act like a leader; behave like an owner of the organisation.”

Tips:

- Consult widely
- Find ways to reinforce the values through all your processes
- Make everyone accountable for ensuring that we all live according to our values.

Case study 18 – Thames Reach

Charity name	Thames Reach
Activity	Helping the homeless
Interview with	Jeremy Swain, CEO
Website	www.thamesreach.org.uk
Employees	350
Volunteers	200

Main reason for having values:

The organisation needs an anchor and reference point that ultimately reminds us of the essence of the organisation and what we stand for – particularly during turbulent times

Values journey

The values are displayed on walls across the organisation. They are distinctive. The values are being talked about more than usual because of a comprehensive organisational staff restructure which has been extremely tough for everyone. Staff often refer back to them as they offer security about what Thames Reach stands for and why they do the work.

During these times, they remind the staff of what makes the organisation unique and special. They appear in documents but come up in conversations too. For the staff interacting with commissioners and funders the values help them illustrate how Thames Reach is different from other similar organisations and steer them to only go for the work which fits with the core values.

Further information:

Their seventh value:

“Our messages – our strength lies in knowing what is happening ‘on the ground’ and we will use this knowledge to make an impact at the very highest level, especially by giving our service users the chance to speak directly with those with influence and power. We will always ‘tell it as it is’, presenting information and offering views with integrity and honesty, even when the message may be unpopular.”

The line they take on issues is often contentious and sometimes seen by others as hard-line. It is informed by what is happening on the streets and is very direct. This means they are not always popular with other organisations, for example, when they started a campaign to discourage the public giving money to people begging as the

evidence showed that the money was being spent mostly on hard drugs. The message makes the biggest impact when it is relayed by service users. Many service users write about their experiences for Thames Reach and they also talk directly to government ministers, something that Thames Reach actively encourages. Other organisations may be more protective of their service users, and do not want them to be active in these ways. Service users want to be identified in publicity material and the first stated Thames Reach value about not giving up on someone no matter how complex and challenging the person may be is very popular with them and with staff.

Staff see the value in giving people chance after chance because they believe that at some point the effort will pay off and the people Thames Reach support have not been given chances in the past. It doesn't mean they are soft. It is good to remind themselves of this commitment, especially when they feel the person they are supporting is taking a step backwards.

They have had these values for about twelve years. They were devised when the Hogarth Partnership, a supporter of the organisation, ran some focus groups on a pro bono basis. If they were revisiting the ethos and values statements now, Jeremy would remove 'anyone can become homeless' as it contradicts the evidence they have which shows that people with the same profile tend to become homeless; for example, people who come from broken homes, have not received a good education and had early involvement with the police and the criminal justice system.

It has taken a while for a couple of the values to sink in. Number Six is one of these: "Free from dogma – Thames Reach will be renowned for its open-mindedness, creativity, flexibility and refusal to allow a rigid approach to reduce its effectiveness or inhibit its actions." This requires an openness to new ideas and ways of working which is a challenge, especially in tough times when it is easy to retreat back to ways of doing things which feel safer and less threatening.

Because of the current difficult times and as part of the development of the next Business Plan, the values have been revisited recently and the senior management team feel they are still distinctive and can galvanise people. However, Jeremy suggests that the third value, about staff, is bland and the same as everyone else's although giving staff a lot of autonomy (one aspect of this value statement) is important to them and sets them apart from some other organisations. Jeremy felt that the 'psychological contract' between the organisation and staff has been frayed through the painful restructure and a programme is being put in place to renew and rebuild communication with staff and the ethos and values statements will underpin it.

The ethos and values can be used to challenge the CEO's views about the direction being taken by the organisation and he thinks that this is a good use of them. They are currently re-vamping the style and content of the annual review and, again, the ethos and values statements will be an essential ingredient of the new report.

Case study 19 – Voluntary Action Harrow

Charity name	Voluntary Action Harrow
Activity	Support individuals and charities to make a difference in their communities.
Interview with	Sarah Kersey
Website	www.voluntaryactionharrow.org.uk
Employees	0
Volunteers	9

Main reason for having values:

Integral to being a co-operative.

Values journey

The organisation is a co-operative and about six months old. They are not yet earning any money and so are running on volunteers. They intend to pay themselves once the organisation starts earning money.

The organisation has kept the code of co-operatives³ rather than sorting out their own values as they felt these covered what they'd look to include as values anyway.

Of the code, number five, about “education, training and information” is reported as the favourite and this is being structured into the business pattern. This recognises the importance of continued education and allows for any learning to be embedded in what they do. This learning objective can also be about the community.

Sarah feels that often organisational values are led by the CEO or Trustees rather than the views of the whole staff team. She feels that it needs to be a bottom-up approach otherwise it can end up being nothing other than aspirational. One of the important differences is between those who are working to look after the strategy and the public face rather than those at the delivery end.

A bottom-up approach enables buy-in. The whole organisation has to contribute in deciding the values to ensure engagement rather than lip service.

People looking to join their co-operative are drawn to their values. They feel invested and that it is a good share between self, job and community.

Values can become what organisations think people want to hear.

³ See below

People often communicate their own values rather than the organisational ones if they have not been involved in designing them.

The co-operative was set up to avoid governance issues which had historically been negative. Those involved in setting up the co-op found the code once they'd decided to operate in this way.

Previously they had been the Council for Voluntary Sector Services. There had been a financial scandal and so they lost funding. This resulted in redundancies and nine of them banded together to continue delivering the services.

They cast themselves as a social enterprise rather than a charity.

Currently they are in the middle of developing their own vision and values in addition to the code. They think they'll still be closely connected to the code, especially in terms of ethics – for example, in choosing organisations to work with whose values fit their own.

In working on their own vision and values, so far they have held a brainstorming session. They have also had support from the Co-operative Enterprise Hub. The co-operative assistance network has put them in touch with other co-operatives and they have found that there is lots of best practice which filters through to other groups.

Extract from website:

Voluntary Action Harrow (VAH) has been established as a worker co-operative.

Worker co-operatives are businesses that are owned and democratically controlled by their employee members using co-operative principles. They are an attractive and increasingly relevant alternative to traditional investor owned models of enterprise. [<http://www.workercode.coop>]

Voluntary Action Harrow will follow the seven co-operative principles set out in the Worker Co-operative Code of Governance

1. Voluntary and open membership – membership is open to all workers able and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership
2. Democratic member control –members should actively participate in the governance of the co-operative enterprise. One member, one vote. Elected representatives are answerable to the membership
3. Member economic participation –members democratically control the capital of the business, some of which is common property. Surpluses (profits) are used for developing the co-operative, paying members in proportion to their work for the co-operative and other uses approved by the members

4. Autonomy and independence – co-operatives are autonomous enterprises, controlled by their members. Agreements, contracts and financial arrangements with external parties must recognise this
5. Education, training and information – provide education and training for members, elected representatives, officers, managers and employees to improve their contribution to the development of their co-operative. Promote the nature and benefits of co-operative organisation to the public
6. Co-operation among co-operatives –co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together at local, national, regional and international levels
7. Concern for community – co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities.

Action stations

The **quarter of a million** people represented in this survey, are a significant portion of the six hundred thousand employees and 16 million volunteers within the general charities sector. For all values can provide **clarity, focus and inspiration**. Each person committed to a charity, whether as an employee, trustee or volunteer, is passionate about a cause, so the momentum to use values effectively is clearly evident.

The grotesque distortion or absence of values in institutions such as banks and the tabloid press, particularly as demonstrated over recent months, is a powerful call to action for organisations within the nonprofit sector:

Surely we can practise what we preach, and by doing so attract more supporters to our campaigns?

To identify and apply values requires time and energy, but this survey shows just how worthwhile and fundamentally important this can be.

Where next?

If you are planning to introduce values, review an existing model or enact your values to their full potential, consultants from **Cass Centre for Charity Effectiveness** are here to help you. We have proven ability to enhance the performance of our clients through trusted, professional relationships.

We can:

- open up discussions with your trustees
- launch questionnaires
- facilitate workshops
- design and facilitate an away day
- help you to communicate effectively with your stakeholders.

The outcomes of this report will also feature in the new series of *Outstanding Leadership Seminars*. Facilitated by Ian Lawson and Maggie Smith, these two hour sessions offer busy nonprofit leaders the change to build upon their leadership skills. Participants who have been through the programme have found it enhances many elements of their performance at work, particularly in relation to values.

For further information and preliminary enquires about any of the above please contact Matthew Guest.

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Space for notes

To practise what we preach
an exploratory survey of values in charities

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Cass Business School

In 2002, City University's Business School was renamed Sir John Cass Business School following a generous donation towards the development of its new building in Bunhill Row. The School's name is usually abbreviated to Cass Business School.

Sir John Cass's Foundation

Sir John Cass's Foundation has supported education in London since the 18th century and takes its name from its founder, Sir John Cass, who established a school in Aldgate in 1710. Born in the City of London in 1661, Sir John served as an MP for the City and was knighted in 1713.